

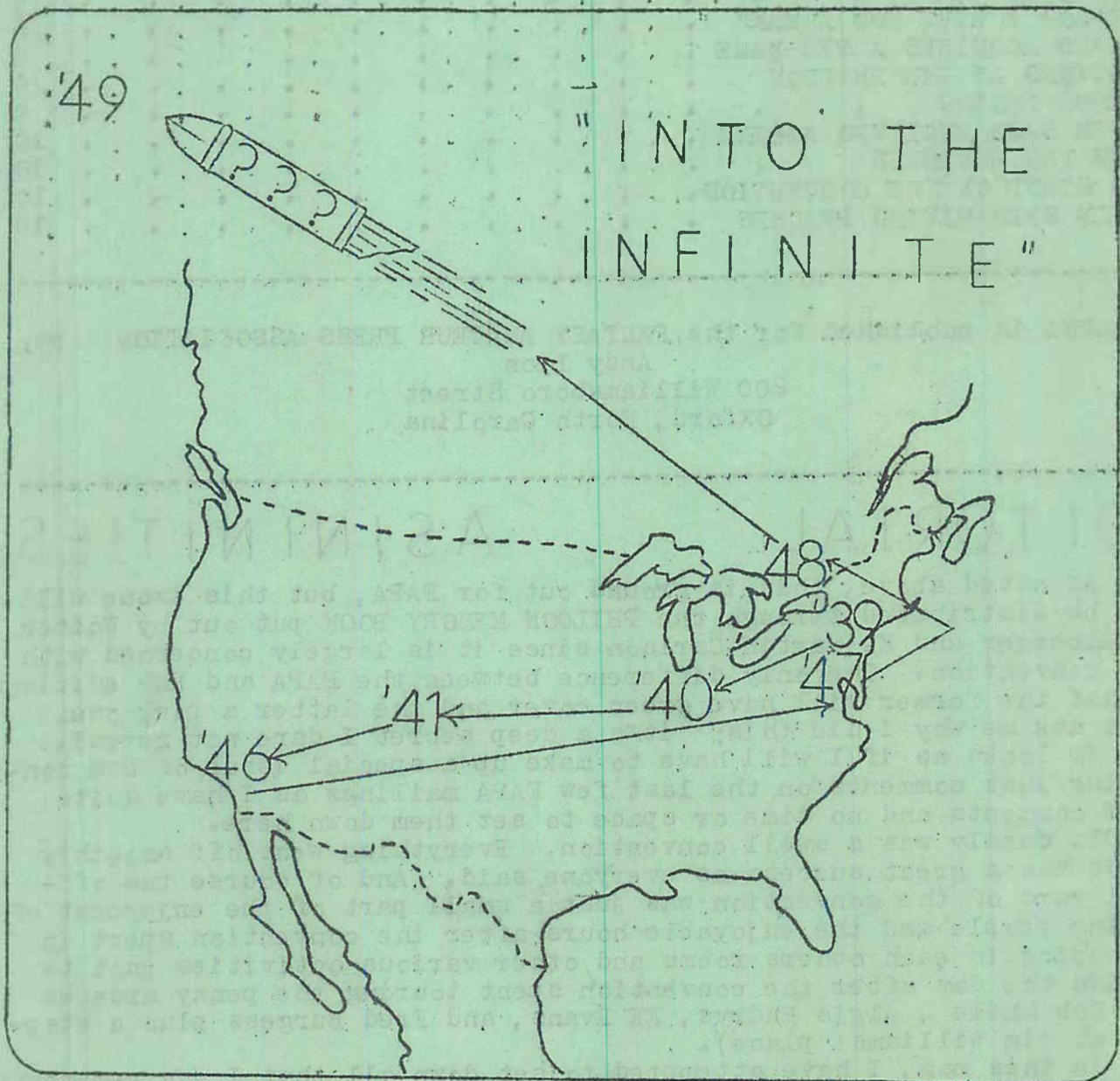
F A N O M E N A

PHILCON A ISSUE

SEPT

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1947



"THE EUGENIC FAN"

BY COL. DAVID H. KELLER

FANOMENA

SEPTEMBER 1947

F A P A

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EDITORIAL ASININITIES

As noted above, this is ground out for FAPA, but this issue will also be distributed through the PHILCON MEMORY BOOK put out by Walter Dunkelberger and K. Martin Carlson since it is largely concerned with that convention. The only difference between the FAPA and PMB editions is that the former will have green cover and the latter a pink one. Don't ask me why I did this; it's a deep secret I dare not reveal.

It looks as if I will have to make up a special issue of NOM containing just comments on the last few FAPA mailings as I have quite a few comments and no time or space to set them down here.

It surely was a swell convention. Everything went off smoothly and it was a great success as everyone said. And of course the official part of the convention was just a small part of the enjoyment of meeting people and the enjoyable hours after the convention spent in fangabbing in each others rooms and other various activities (not to mention the day after the convention spent touring the penny arcades with Bob Madle, Algis Budrys, EE Evans, and Fred Burgess plus a stop-over at Jim Williams' place).

In this mag, I have attempted to set down all that I can remember that happened of importance. If there are any errors or anything I have left out, please forgive me. I hope that for those who could not attend, this will serve to let them know in some small way what went on. For those who did, well maybe it will refresh their memory. This is probably being done by several dozen others, but--oh well---

In closing, to those who attended, I am glad to have met you and to those who could not, I am sorry and hope to see you all next year in Toronto.

THE EUGENIC FAN

BY COL. DAVID H. KELLER

Fifty-nine years ago, when the fans of science-fiction met in Toronto, Canada, they had little realization of the importance of that gathering. A movement started during that meeting that reached full bloom only at the end of nearly six decades. For years the program was kept a profound secret. Now in 2007 it can be revealed.

A speech made at the Toronto meeting by the noted science-fiction author, S. S. Smithers aroused considerable attention. At that time he was slightly past the prime but still filled with the divine fire which flowed from his fertile brain to the typed page. For over an hour he thrilled the fan audience with his account of the birth and growth of his celebrated CRYSTAL stories. For three years he had thought about these terrific tales; at last he started to write. For twenty years he kept on writing about the conflicting races on distant planets, the machine men who did not have the intelligence to conquer the brain men, and about the brain men who were not sufficiently mechanical minded to overpower the machine men. His stories flowed backward one hundred million years and forward for several trillion years. Time became of no importance; the only thing worth while was that the best race must ultimately win to save some future super race from destruction.

S. S. Smithers proudly announced that after a few more stories the Crystal series would end. The audience was relieved until he went on to say that the final super race, which he thought was finally safe was to be threatened by a very horrible race from a far more distant planet, and that he was starting on another series. The only fly in the jar of ointment was his fear that he would not live long enough to finish this second series which he thought would take at least fifty more years.

This announcement stunned the fans. Smithers, the greatest author of all science fiction, the man who had written the Crystal series which was great because no one knew where it began or ended or what it was all about, had another far better series but would he live long enough to write it?

The National Fan Association did not hesitate. A letter was written and signed by twelve publishers, twenty-seven editors, fifty-seven authors, three hundred and seventy fans and one bell boy. It was sent by radio telegraph to the Sockerweller Foundation for the Promotion of Science. In reply the Foundation offered to provide funds to supply Smithers with all the Vitamin XY needed to prolong his life for sixty years. The fans cheered wildly when this telegram was read to them. It was terrific!

But a new problem faced the more serious minded of the Fan Association. Only one-half of one percent of all the readers of the Crystal series were willing to state that they THOUGHT they knew what the stories were about and no one, not even Smithers was certain. Gloom settled on the gathering. If Smithers wrote another series, taking sixty years to finish it, would anyone be able to solve the mystery of the plot? What fan, living or dead, born or unborn, would have the intelligence to tell the anxious fans what Smithers really was talking about in this second series? Would Smithers be able to do it?

It was then that the GREAT IDEA was evolved. Perhaps in the next sixty years a fan could be bred by careful selection of grand-parents and parents who would have such a super-super fan intelligence that when this second series was finished could solve the mystery. In

other words through a confluence of properly selected chromosomes and careful eugenic breeding, a science fiction fan could be finally created who would surpass all previous fans in every possible way.

The very thought made the strongest trample. Several female fans fainted from the very thought of being asked to help in this wonderful procreative program. Four fans were finally selected to become the Great-Grandfathers of the Super-Fan. Their names, even after the passing of years are still held sacred. In the 1940's they were giants of fandom, Poskowitz, Sackerman, Sprant and Bennely. They were all bachelors in their prime who stood tottering on the brink of matrimony and did not want anyone to push them over.

But now their love of science fiction overcame their fear of becoming Slaves of the Wedding Ring. Not one hesitated. It was difficult for them to find female fans of sufficient intelligence to equal their gigantic understanding of science fiction. Poskowitz had to go to the Solomon Islands for a mate. Sackerman married Amy Worth, then whom there was no whomer. Finally all were married. Those in the inner circle held their breath.

I cannot without violating sacred, confidential communications tell what happened in the next forty years. I have in my files twenty seven and one quarter pounds of letters from the grandparents and parents of the Super-Fan; also 7,560 pages of typed minutes of the monthly meetings of the honored progenitors. What hopes and fears they show! One beautiful girl, after showing great promise, turned into a Weird Tale Fan. A boy with an IQ of 270 was so impressed with the ups and downs of real life that he became an elevator operator and read comicbooks in his off hours. But at long last after forty years the Super-Fan was born.

He proved his ability from the first. At ten months, placed in a room with a banjo, a toy tank and a copy of Amazing Stories he was discovered literally eating the magazine until it was only pulp and saliva. At the age of two he refused Mother Goose and cried if science-fiction stories were not read to him. At three years he was reading the best of science fiction, carefully selected by a National Committee. At six he began to collect complete files of the magazines, especially the ones edited by fans all over the world. His collection increased. Finally seven additional rooms had to be built to hold his collection. At eight he began to write, at nine he was publishing his own magazine, while at twelve he was asked to assume charge of six of the most important science fiction magazines in the world. He did this under assumed names, and few fans know, even today, the fact that he wrote seven thousand and fifty-one stories which he published under seventy-seven names in the magazines he edited.

This was the man who could understand the Crystal Series and the secondseries BEYOND THE BEYOND written for many decades by Smithers. In him rested the hope of all fandom. He, if anyone, could unravel the reveled mystery.

The 2007 International Fan Association met in Hopi-Popi, a small island in the Pacific. Fans came by steamer, airplane, submarine and several on the new flying saucers. Smithers was there carefully cared for by celebrated physicians. He was now an old man. The Super-Fan arrived and at once was mobbed by autograph hounds. The distinguished Progenitors attended, feeling terrifically important.

For two days the program was filled with lectures and discussions on various scientific matters such as space travel, atomic energy, and the ultimate fate of the carbon atom. For a while much excitement

resulted from an attempted invasion by the zeroes through a crater of a dead volcano, but this was rapidly checked by hurling several resolutions into the crater where they exploded with deadly results.

Finally on the third day the great moment came. S. S. Smithers was introduced to the audience. It was a great day in the life of a great man. He said:

"Fifty-nine years ago I finished the Crystal Series and began the BEYOND THE BEYOND series. Thanks to the Vitamin XY I have lived long enough to complete this, my second great work. In these two series I have gone forward and backward in time, and occasionally side-wise and once or twice in a circular movement that left me somewhat dizzy."

Great applause!!!

"In these great stories, since there is neither beginning nor ending, there is no middle. In them lies a deep mysterious meaning which so far has been beyond the mind of any fan to unravel. Even I, up to last night did not know what the real plot was. Then it came to me while I was asleep. It came in a dream. I cannot tell you what that dream was---you will have to wait till I finish my next series, which I am starting on at once. I cannot close till I thank you fans who have been reading this stupendous work for over eighty years."

The Chairman interrupted him.

"I want to introduce the SUPER-FAN. He has solved the plot of the Crystal Stories, he knows what the Beyond the Beyond stories really mean. He has a message that fans have been waiting over sixty years to hear."

Wild applause!!!

The Super-Fan said:

"I am now going to tell you the real mystery of these stories---"

"Not if I can help it!" cried S. S. Smithers and shot the Super-Fan through the head. As he shot the old man dropped dead.

The Super-Fan did not die. The bullet lodged in the exact center of his science-fiction frontal lobe, causing complete dissolution. From that time he was able to talk, move and read, but he lost interest in all pulp literature except the Western Cowboy stories. The rest of his life he sang "Home on the Range" and "Don't Fence Me In" as he delivered ice to the beautiful ladies in Los Angeles.

Done Sept. 3, 1947 by David H. Keller for publication in Fanomena, published by Andy Lyon, Oxford, North Carolina. All fan magazines failing to reprint will be prosecuted under the U. S. Copyright Law, act of 1949, Article 7, Section 5, Paragraph 3, Subsection 1.

T O R O N T O

Toronto, Canada was accepted by the convention as the site for the Sixth World Science-Fiction Convention. The convention will be held during the July Fourth Holidays. A good many at the Philcon paid their buck dues (No. 1 was Ackerman as usual). Why not send in yours now so as to help them get off to a good start with a good bit in their treasury. Hope to see you there. &c

1948—6TH WORLD SF CONVENTION

"AND NOW I GIVE YOU A MAN-----"

SPEECHES, OR ANYTHING THAT COULD, BY THE VAGUEST CLASSIFICATION, BE
CONSIDERED A SPEECH AT THE PHILCON

August 30: Afternoon

The Fifth World Science-Fiction Convention, or PHILCON, opened at 1:00 PM with a welcome speech by CHAIRMAN MILTON ROTHMAN. Then Rothman proceeded to call upon attendees for a word or six. Professional Scientifictionists were called upon to stand and say a few words, followed by the more well-known fans as well as those that had come a good distance to attend. Needless to say, no world-shaking words were uttered, but it was interesting nonetheless.

The main speaker for the day JOHN W. CAMPBELL, enlightened with some extremely informative facts about nuclear physics and atomics the then settled audience. After his speech C. conducted a question-and-answer session, which some how veered to the political side with JWC taking a crack at a statement made earlier by RALPH MILNE FARLEY concerning a proposed amendment to the US Constitution.

Following intermission, the editors were to have their say, but the only one to be present was SAM MERWIN, the now defunct Sarge Saturn, but still up there as editor of SS and TWS. Merwin, rather than trying to make a speech answered questions as to his two mags. When asked about the covers, he replied, "The art department is a mysterious thing which we have very little to do with---as you can tell by the covers." (Applause). Also he did a very laudable job of parrying thrusts with would-be hecklers. (Hear the clash of foils?) One very interesting question to Merwin was, "When is 'Unknown Worlds' coming back?". With an appropriate answer the editor bowed himself out. WOLLHEIM failed to appear as scheduled to speak.

Sometime around now, I think it was that E. E. Smith read a short delivery to the now dwindled group. Frankly, I was rather sleepy myself so I don't remember exactly what it was he said; however, vaguely recalling that Doc said something about any fanzine editor quoting him would get "their ears snapped down", perhaps this is fortunate.

Introductions of resolutions and other fan business came next, but since the most important of these is covered elsewhere this ish, we'll say the meeting broke up.

Evening

Various publishers were heard from. Someone (I believe it was Don Grant) spoke for Hadley (Speak for yourself, Tom. "Cant; my tongue's caught in the bottle!!") on forthcoming pubs. LLOYD ARTHUR ESHBACH then gave a brief preview on forthcoming books from FANTASY Press. He was accompanied to the Philcon by other associates. Paul Spencer then reported on publication of DR. KELLER'S "SIGN OF THE BURNING HART" sponsored by the NEFF. PAUL DENNIS O'CONNOR, of New Collector's Group, whose words flowed out smoothly as molasses, (really fascinating to listen to) talked a while on scheduled releases from that house. Then SAM MOSKOWITZ (after shutting off the public address system) whispered as co-owner of AVALON about the new Keller book, "Life Everlasting". And that, I believe, wound up the publishers.

While they unwound, the auction began conducted by ERLE KORSHAK and SAM. Rumor has it that Al Brown helped later in the evening. Many valuable originals (paintings; some bringing up in the mid-thirties or higher maybe) and manuscripts were bought as well as books and mags. Some private transactions went on too. Ah yes, much valuable stuff (and valuabler money) was passed around back and forth. With the end of the auction, the first day closed. Snark---ZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ.

Almost neglected Hon. O Tucker's one-hundred

August 31: Afternoon

To start things rolling, L. SPRAGUE DE CAMP lectured on and discussed occultism in its various forms including cults, fake mediums, etc. De Camp is, as one person put it, "one of the very few men who can look casual and imposing at the same time". His speech was a masterpiece of delivery, and afterward when he was answering questions, he refused to be stumped, and never seemed at a loss for words. I would place his speech in top position with one other (mentioned later) as the best of the convention.

Following this, Chan Davis spoke briefly and then launched the discussion, "Is Science-Catching-up-with Science-Fiction?", which wound hither and yon, and back and forth and finally ended with no definite conclusion, but thoroughly proved and thoroughly disproved. Confusing, what? (This, the democratic way of giving opinions of both sides)

After intermission, ERLE KORSHAK spoke on "Collection of Fantasy Literature" (At some of the prices he quoted, he might have added, "AT the risk of impoverishment otherwise"), giving some very rare titles, which although many were out of reach of most collectors, still proved interesting enough.

The BSFA took over at this point with Moskowitz conducting. Some special program was to have been presented, but something happened, and so various pinch hitters were called upon, and a very good job they did, considering the short length of time they had to prepare in. JOE KENNEDY spoke on the fan world in general and specifically the fanzine field, also I believe getting in a plug for FAPA and SAPS (wouldn't swear to it). After this, Col. David H. Keller told of some of his experiences with pro editors such as Wright and Gernsback. Col. Keller was in on the beginning of magazine stf, and is full of stories and anecdotes of this "Golden Age". This ended the afternoon session.

August 31: Evening

The evening consisted of entertainment, and the whole thing bid fair to be the high spot of the convention. L. JEROME STANTON was Master of Ceremonies. George O. Smith put on an hilarious pantomime, demonstrating the wonderful things that can be done with the human hair. Philip Klass (William Tenn) read a series of letters (fictitious) from readers to him, which had the bunch roaring before he was finished. (I might add that these letters will be printed in a forthcoming issue of that woe-begotten rag, SPARK, published by a creature named Henry M. Spelman III (one "l", please)). Don't miss it! A performance of PRESTIDIGITATION (see de Camp for definition) was scheduled, but failed to come off.

Musical selections rounded out the program. Stanton and Theodore Sturgeon gave out with a stringed instrumental duet, which called for an encore. Miss Mary Mair obliged with two selections (vocal) one a tune in Burl-Iveish fashion, the other "Thunder and Roses" from the story of that name by Sturgeon to appear in Astounding SF. A quartet of musical nonentities, namely Kennedy, Burgess, Fox and Budrys then rendered a quaint tune concerning Amazing, Shaver, deives and associated apparatus, much to the enjoyment of most all present. This was composed in collaboration with Cole Porter. (This was funny the first few dozen times I heard it, but after a couple of days of constantly hearing Burgess chanting and recording it with his own embellishments, it leaves a lackluster taste) Chan Davis then played one of his own compositions, "Song of Worlds Unseen", (also now on records) which is equally as good as any serious piece of music by any modern composer (How good that is I leave to the opinion of the reader). Davis also played another one, "Horse". I never could find whether this was his own or not.

and five recorded, detailed 7 talk on "at vetera."

September 1: Afternoon

GEORGE O. SMITH said a few words to start things off in what was obviously an effort to merely fulfill an obligation as member of PSES without going to too much expense of time and effort. Not bad, what there was of it.

Next came WILLY LEY in his part of the symposium of interplanetary travel. This is the speech which I would tie with de Camp's for first place. After treating briefly of some of the early types and plots of interplanetary travel, he then lectured thoroughly upon the actual science and problems concerning rocket design and operation, complete with blackboard (when it would work) demonstration. DR. THOMAS S. GARDNER then took over with his part considering the possibilities of atomics as a means of power for travel through space, presenting his theories earnestly and convincingly. Later he and WILLY LEY answered a number of questions, and then retired.

After intermission and fan business, the afternoon session broke up to allow the banquet to be prepared.

September 1: Evening----Banquet

At seven the attendees gathered with one common thought in mind. Was it stf? No. Was it science? No. What then, you ask. The answer is F-O-O-D. Unfortunately, a slight technicality prevented the dinner from being served on time, so the fans had to amuse themselves in various ways. Drs. Smith and Keller spoke briefly, and various other fans were called upon for a few words. Harry B. Moore sang a ribald tune titled "Cocaine Lil" to the pleasure of all and Ned McKedown "built a house". Milton Rothman gave out with some good music on the piano, as did that Fan of Fans, Bob Tucker, whose "One Finger Concerto" evoked a tremendous response.

Finally the food arrived, and when various fans thereafter were asked for speeches they all said with one accord, "Glub!" At last the twilight of the Philcon approached, and with a final word by Col. Keller and a farewell speech by Rothman, officially (unofficially the fun was just going good) the curtain fell on a swell convention. Finis.

EE EVANS ACQUIRES A PEN-NAME

This is the story of how E. Everett Evans got a new name hung on him at the Philcon.

The first day, before the convention started, I wandered into the hall, where Rothman was unpacking various articles, assisted by a tall fellow wearing glasses, with iron-grey hair and a small mustache.

(Ah, I say to myself, that must be EE Evans. Good old Everett, working away, always ready to lend a helping hand. Methinks I'll go over and meet him.)

Approaching him I said:

"Everett Evans I presume?"

With a vague look and hand cupped to ear: "Hey?"

(Poor old Everett; must be deaf) Aloud: "You're EEEvans aren't you?"

"Speak up. Can't hear very well."

"WHAT'S YOUR NAME?"

"Harry."

(Can this be Harry Moore?) "HARRY WHAT?"

"Harry Korvin."

Slightly alarmed: "ARE YOU A FAN?"

Slightly irate: "A WHAT?"

Rothman comes on the scene to inform me that the fellow is a hotel employee. So due to a case of mixed identity, EEE will be known as Harry Korvin in this corner from now on. Korvin? Just call him Tripoli.

This dog is devastated, @ Hon. Tucker. Oh woe!

PHANZINES AT THE PHILCON

BLOOMINGTON NEWS-LETTER from Bob Tucker. This humorag starts off with a quote from a mistaken book critic who casts Derleth in the role of editor of Weird Tales. Continues with something about Burbee (as usual) and the remainder of the space is taken up with hilarious reprints from Bob Zombie's fanzine LeTucker, slightly changed to meet the changing situation.

TYMPANY from Bob Stein. Lying somewhere between a newsie and a straight fanmag, this issue tells about the forthcoming FANTASY BOOK?, a review by Ackerman of "Pilgrims through Space and Time" now out (at last), ads, some movie news from various sources, letters from readers, and of course news from various contributors.

VARIANT, the PSFS club organ, edited by Williams and Cloukey, geosmith as art editor. A large issue that would make any editor proud. Although there are numerous typographical errors and the duplication (vari-typed and multilithed) is a bit faded at places, the art-work, especially the cover is excellent. Included are a skit of the PSFS, data about PsFS members, a reprint of a speech by Keller, a book review by Train, pomes, various articles by Waldo, Rothman (two, in fact very good) Bob Madle, Thompson, Mead, Anon, contributions by the editors, and three hilarious bits by Lex Phillips, Alfred Prime, and Benson Dooling.

QUINTESSENTIAL NOTHING-FROM Jack Speer. The Deep Purple falls once again before the eyes of fandom in a small-sized format with Speer still in there plugging for FAPA. Gone are the days when an inquiry to the Sec-Treas as to membership failed to even get a reply. After a short comment by the editor, comes a review of the publications at the Pacifican, mostly taken up with minutely dissecting the Combozine. Some quotes from law textbooks follow which I would comment on had I time. Also a bit about Freedom, some amusing poetry, a book title quiz, and a convention skit, with the whole thing perforated with such delightful speerisms as "Make a noise like a korzybski".

WEIRD UNSOLVED MYSTERIES from John Chrisman. A well printed job taken up mainly with quotations from various newssources about the flying discs. A preview of the coming issues is included as are various bits by the editor about the policy and concept of the mag. Announcement of a prize contest was made. Also from ALTA PUBS was an ad sheet. PHILCON CONVENTION BOOKLET. A neatly done job containing a list of Philcon members, a message from Milt Rothman greetings from various fans and fan clubs, book ads, cartoons, mag editor (PRO) greetings, the program and space devoted to autographs.

THE SECRET SANCTUM, TIMEBINDERS, ATOTE, and HOW TO READ A NEWSPAPER from EEEvans. All of these published in the irreproachably neat Evans format. I haven't had time to read most of these, with the exception of the two earlier issues of Timebinder, which I had not read and was extremely glad to get hold of. ATOTE I'll read with FAPA mailing. Also of course, there were various leaflets and folders from various professional sources; one from Shasta Publishers, several from Fantasy Press, and one from Utopia Pubs announcing a series of portfolios of famous artists, beginning with ten of Hannes Bok's. There were probably more fanzines than this, but this is all I was able to lift.

FANTASY PRESS WILL PUBLISH BOOK OF PHOTOS

There were several people at the convention taking photos, and while various fans were wondering how they could get some of them, M LLOYD ARTHUR ESHBACH announced that FANTASY PRESS would contact all the photographers, and prepare a booklet of the best for distribution. The fans deeply appreciate this generosity of Mr. Eshbach.

SHAVER SAGA RECEIVES AIRING

The Shaver Mystery came in for its share of publicity during the sessions of the convention devoted to resolutions and fan business when one well-known fan (methinks best not to mention names) brought out a resolution that the convention go on record as being against the Shaver Mythos, Amazing Stories and all who do give or pretend to give credence to the stories. A hint of blackmail by the Amz staff was hinted at and other facets brought to light.

Up to this time all had gone quietly. Immediately another fan rose and denounced the resolution, and from then on out it was anybody's battle. The opinions ranged thus: Palmer and Shaver were fakes and should be tarred and feathered, Palmer and Shaver were wrong but that any adverse publicity would only increase their popularity with some, Palmer was just a financial genius who knew how to make money, and P & S wer the true leaders of tomorrow's world(or something to that effect). Later the resolution was mimeo'd along with a somewhat less aggressive alternative. During the last day's session, when all resolutions were to have been voted upon, a fan arose and suggested that the whole thing be tabled till next year's convention. This was passed unanimously and the whole thing dropped. Scooo next year there will be the poser---"SHOULD SHAVER BE OR SHOULD WE LET HIM?"

OTHER FAN BUSINESS

Along with the abovementioned, there were numerous other things to be settled. One of these was the disposition of the residue left from the convention funds. Rothman announced that the convention was a great success financially. The committee appointed decided that the money should be divided thus; a part to go to the next convention society to help get started, part to go to the PSFS, part to go to buy books and mags for a disabled veteran mentioned in a letter read earlier by Alex Osheroff from Arthur Leo Zagat, and the remainder to be divided equally between the EF and NFFF. There were also a few small funds to be covered, but all the shares were well worth having.

The other-main point was selection of next convention site. Although four places were rumored to be placing bids, only two did; Milwaukee and Toronto. Toronto won by a fairly large majority. Maybe Milwaukee next time.

NORTH CAROLINA'S STAND ON THE CONVENTION

Although North Carolina was rumored as one of the states to bid for the convention and though it was favored in some quarters, still we never actually considered it for next year. While the CSFA is active, still we are hampered by our more active members being located some distance apart which makes it rather difficult at the present. However; we have some excellent locations, access to a number of fine speakers, and material enough to put on a good convention. Therefore it is not inconceivable that some time in the fairly near future the old North State may bid for the World SF Convention.

PHILLY SEES FLYING PEACHES

On the night of Sept. 1-2, Philadelphia was deluged not with flying saucers, but with peaches. The objects were seen flying through the air for some time in the region of the Penn-Sheraton, until some over-zealous fellow dropped the whole basket, ending it all. The night before another of fandom's worthies was apprehended by local gendarmes for shooting sky-rockets off the roof to serve as a beacon to WILLY LEY. As usual the good old scapegoats, Sigma Alpha Rho got blamed.